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British, French Ships Barred From Using Canal, Nasser Says

Jordan Warned on Fedayeen | Until Israel Quits Gaza

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New Towns Where Human Habitation Was Unheard Of CHINA STRIKES OIL

By O. M. GREEN

LONDON (APRIL 10). — BY far the most spectacular discovery of oil fields in the world has been made in the vast deserts and scattered oases, once known only to a few tribes of nomads living in the area.

Already new towns are springing up where once there was no human habitation, to become the homes of hundreds of thousands of workers.

Manuel Herndon, unemployed from Shanghai and thousands of ex-army men for whom the government could be found elsewhere. The importance of the oilfields for China's future industry is incalculable.

There are four main centres. The best known is Yumen in Kansu. Last July it was linked by a branch line with the railway which is being built from Lanzhou, capital of Kansu, to cross Sinkiang and join the Russian Turkestan railway — two-fifths of the 2,700 kilometres to this formidable undertaking are now completed. Tanker trains are bringing oil along the branch from Yumen and returning laden with construction materials and more workers.

Another field, Taishan, discovered two years ago, is about 150 kilometres south of Yumen, with which it has been connected by a new road for the conveyance of oil and material.

Russo-Chinese Company. A third field, Tushan, is about 300 kilometres west of Tihwa (formerly called Urumchi) capital of Sinkiang. Oil was produced here in 1933, fell into disuse in the war, was revived in 1950 by a joint-stock Russo-Chinese company which was transferred entirely to Chinese hands in 1954.

Other fields are being discovered in Sinkiang, and in the north-east of China, payment being spread over several years — a notable sign of China's recovery of the control of Sinkiang from the Russians.

But by far the richest field is in the Daungaria Basin in northwest Sinkiang, where the Tien Shan and Altai mountains meet. Its existence was verified only 15 months ago. But its proved wealth far exceeds that of the other fields, and it is almost certain other oilfields adjoining it.

In the Uighur language, Karamay means Black Oil. The Karamay oilfield was discovered to collect oil from surface pools and sell it. But the importance of the field was first recognized by a team of geologists led by the Russian Uvarov in 1934.

The first test well was sunk in the summer of 1954. The drilling team endured extreme hardships. They lived in dugouts, cooking was difficult in the high desert wind, water had to be brought from the distant Tien Shan, and the workers had to wrap themselves in furs for protection against the swarms of mosquitoes.

But on October 30, 1955, they struck oil; it was a gusher. Other test wells were drilled: there are now 20 spread over an area of 4,000 square kilometres and all producing oil.

Karamay's nearest contact with the outside world is Tushan, 13 kilometres southwards, to which a road

has been built. Along this there is a continual stream of lorries bringing materials for the wells and prefabricated houses for the workers. Most of the workers still have to live in tents but there is a shopping centre, schools and a hospital, and an underground railway from which it is possible to telephone to families at home. By 1959 it is expected there will be an 80-kilometre railway from Tihwa to the Karamay-Sinkiang line through Karamay to the forests of the Altai.

Of other areas near Karamay where there is good evidence of oil, a writer in the Peking monthly, "China Reconstruction," says that although a big working force has been assembled and capital construction is going ahead rapidly, neither is keeping pace with new discoveries as the situation continues.

How much of China is producing from its own wells is not stated. Undoubtedly, it is considerable, and Peking, with its usual love of percentages, tells us that 10 per cent more crude oil was produced this year than in 1956, and 23.5 per cent above this year's output will be produced in 1957.

There are also synthetic oil factories at Fushin, the coal centre in Manchuria, Dairen and Shengtung, which should produce about 100,000 tons in 1957. At Lanzhou, which is becoming the greatest railway junction in China, a big oil refinery is being built.

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PEACE AND WITHDRAWAL

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I am therefore asking for the hospitality of your columns to give expression to my view. This is that we should stop our withdrawal so long as we have no firm confidence that the threat against us will cease, that the borders will be quiet and that our sovereign rights on land and sea will be assured.

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